

Message Text

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64

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00 SAJ-01

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 671

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

"USMISSION NATO 2632

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USDEL CSCE GENEVA

S E C R E T ROME 5693

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PARM, MARR, NATO, IT, SP

SUBJECT: NATO PROBLEMS PART II - AS VIEWED BY ITALIAN GENERAL

STAFF

REF: ROME 5692

SUMMARY ON 16 APRIL BERGOLD HELD CONVERSATION WITH GENERAL BUTELLI, AN

AIR FORCE, ONE STAR, WHO IS THE CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF'S OPERATIONS

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AND PLANS SECTION; AND WITH COL. D'AMBROSIO, ARMY WHO WORKS UNDER BUTILLI AS CHIEF OF THE POLITICO/MILITARY OFFICE AND AS SUCH IS THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE'S NATO OFFICE DIRECTOR. D'AMBROSIO HAD ATTENDED DARIN'S LUNCHEON FOR BERGOLD AND, THEREFORE, HAD RECEIVED A GENERAL BRIEFING ON THE STATUS OF U.S. NEGOTIATIONS WITH PORTUGAL, SPAIN AND GREECE. IT WAS OBVIOUS HE HAD FULLY BRIEFED BUTELLI. THIS ACCOUNTS FOR FOCUS OF CONVERSATION ON DPC-RELATED ISSUES OF STANDARDIZATION, ROLE OF NUNN AMENDMENT AT NPG MEETING, SALES OF SPARE PARTS TO TURKEY, AND THE AIR DEFENSE GAP CAUSED BY THE GREEKS.
END SUMMARY

1. BUTELLI EXPRESSED CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM CONCERNING EFFECT OF NUNN AMENDMENT ON THE ALLIANCE. HE ASKED WHETHER THE STUDY OF TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS IT HAD ENGENDERED WOULD BE RIPE FOR INCLUSION ON THE CPG AGENDA, AND IF SO, WHETHER SUCH A DISCUSSION COULD BE RESERVED FOR THE RESTRICTED SESSION. BERGOLD EXPRESSED HIS PERSONAL OPINION THAT THE ANSWERS TO BOTH QUESTIONS WAS YES.

2. IN RESPONSE TO A MORE GENERAL QUESTION REGARDING THE NUNN AMENDMENT, BERGOLD INFORMED THE ITALIANS THAT THE FORCE LEVEL STUDY WOULD BE DISCUSSED IN BRUSSELS SOON BUT THAT THE STANDARDIZATION STUDY, BEING THE MOST COMPLEX OF THE THREE, WAS NOT FINISHED YET.

3. BUTELLI EXPRESSED PLEASURE AT U.S. RECOGNITION THAT STANDARDIZATION MUST BE A "TWO WAY STREET" AND FELT THE SHORAD AND LEOPARD ANNOUNCEMENTS HAD BEEN VERY WELL RECEIVED BY THE ALLIES. DI AMBROSIO OPINED THAT IT WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL IF THE U.S. COULD REACH A SIMILAR DECISION INVOLVING AN ITALIAN PRODUCT BEFORE THE JUNE 15 REGIONAL ELECTIONS. HE HOPED THAT SUCH A VAGUE COMMITMENT COULD THEN SERVE AS THE BASIS FOR AN ARTICLE IN THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNE HE COULD HAVE REPEATED BY ITALIAN NATIONAL PRESS PRIOR TO THE ELECTIONS AS PROOF OF THE MODERN ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO ITALY OF THE ALLIANCE.

4. BERGOLD AGREED SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE HELPFUL BUT CAUTIONED THAT DUE TO ECONOMIC CRISIS FACING THE ALLIANCE, OUR SHORT AND MIDDLE RUN TASKS WAS TO SAVE STANDARDIZATION FROM
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PAROCHIAL INTERESTS FIGHTING TO PRESERVE LOCAL JOBS AT ALL COSTS.

5. CONVERSATION THEN TURNED TO TURKEY'S NEED FOR SPARE PARTS FOR ITS AMERICAN-MANUFACTURED EQUIPMENT. BUTELLI COMMENTED THAT GERMANS NOW SEEMED PREPARED TO PROVIDE F-104 SPARES AND SAID ITALIANS HAD RECEIVED SOME INQUIRIES. THEY AGREED WITH BERGOLD THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO HANDLE THESE WITHIN NATO RATHER

THAN ON A STRICTLY BILATERAL BASIS BUT THEY WONDERED WHETHER THIS PROBLEM COULD BE SUCCESSFULLY COORDINATED WITHIN NATO.

6. TURNING TO GREECE, THEY EXPRESSED SERIOUS CONCERN REGARDING THE AIR DEFENSE GAP ITALY WAS FACING DUE TO GREEK INTRANSIGENCE. IT WAS THEIR BELIEF THAT THE GOI WOULD HAVE TO RAISE THIS MATTER VERY SOON WITH THE GREEKS. FOR THE MOMENT, THEY WERE CONSIDERING A STRICTLY BILATERAL DEMARCHE. BERGOLD THEN EXPLAINED THAT ALLIED SENTIMENT FOR GREEK-NATO NEGOTIATIONS WAS GAINING MOMENTUM AND THAT THE ITALIAN AIR DEFENSE ISSUE WAS A NATURAL FOR INCLUSION IN ANY SUCH TALKS. THE ITALIANS APPEARED TO BE PLEASED WITH THIS PROSPECT AND SAID THEY WOULD RECOMMEND THAT THIS ISSUE BE RAISED BY THEIR NATO MISSION.

7. GENERAL BUTELLI ASSURED BERGOLD THAT INSPITE OF WHAT ONE MIGHT READ IN THE PRESS, ITALY WAS NOT PORTUGAL, AND WOULD STAND FIRM WITH THE ALLIANCE. HE REFERRED TO REPORTS FROM U.S. THAT ITALIAN MILITARY MIGHT GO THE WAY OF THE PORTUGUESE. HE RECOGNIZED THAT WHILE THERE MIGHT BE A VERY SMALL NUMBER OF OFFICERS WITH NEUTRALIST OR LEFTIST VIEWS, THE VAST MAJORITY WERE FORMLY COMMITTED TO NATO AND HAD HAD POSITIVE NATO EXPERIENCE WHICH THEY VALUED HIGHLY. BERGOLD REASSURED THE GENERAL THAT RESPONSIBLE AND BROAD SECTORS OF AMERICAN OPINION DISCOUNTED SUCH FANTASIES, KNEW THAT THE ITALIAN MILITARY WAS A LOYAL AND ESSENTIAL NATO FORCE, AND HAD BEEN HEARTENED BY RECENT STANDS TAKEN BY THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT AND LEADERS OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY. HE CAUTIONED THAT WE ALL MUST GUARD AGAINST FACILE COMPARISONS AND SAID THAT ONE DANGEROUS ONE HE HAD ENCOUNTERED IN EUROPE WAS LIKE PORTUGAL AND THAT THE SPANISH MILITARY WERE LIKELY TO GO THE WAY OF THE PORTUGUESE. BUTELLI AGREED WITH BERGOLD THAT SUCH A COMPARISON WAS NOT CALLED FOR BY THE FACTS. BEAUDRY

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